

# Mayor Sharpe James

59 Wilbur Avenue  
Newark, New Jersey 07112

## BIOGRAPHY

Prior to being elected Mayor of Newark, in an overwhelming victory over four term incumbent, Kenneth A. Gibson, in 1986, Sharpe James, 58, was an Essex County College Professor for 18 years. He is currently on leave of absence from the college's Department of Behavioral Sciences. He was the first African-American to serve as department chair and athletic director within the state college system. He also served as vice-president and president of the Garden State Athletic Conference (GSAC).

Mayor James currently serves as President of the National League of Cities. He is on the Board of Trustees and serves as chairman of the Solid Waste Task Force of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and vice-president of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors. On the local level, he has been President of the Newark Collaboration Group, the Weequahic Community Council and the United Community Corporation's Area Board #9 of Newark's Anti-Poverty Program.

As a national activist, Mayor James has received several prestigious awards including, Ebony Magazine's 100 Most Influential African Americans Award for four consecutive years (1991-94), City and State Magazine's 1992 Most Valuable Public Official Award, Honorary Doctorate of Human Letters from Drew University, Honorary Doctorate of Laws from Montclair State College, 1993 New Jersey Alliance For Action Eagle Award for Excellence in Government, Seton Hall Law School's Thurgood Marshall Award, Renaissance Newark's Van Fossen Partnership Award, the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs "Man of the Year" Award and the Essex County College "Professional Service Award."

Mayor James is the 35th Mayor of New Jersey's largest city and the first councilman to be elected Mayor. Sharpe James was first elected to public office as South Ward Councilman in 1970 and easily won re-election on the first ballot in 1974 and 1978, when he became the first public official in the City's history to run unopposed. He also ran unopposed when he was re-elected as Mayor in 1990.

Born in Jacksonville, Florida on February 20, 1936, Mayor James has spent most of his life in Newark. He graduated from Miller Street Elementary School, South Side High School (now Malcolm X. Shabazz) and with honors from Montclair State College. James holds a master's degree from Springfield (MA) College and has pursued post graduate studies at Washington State, Columbia, and Rutgers Universities.

Mayor James lives in Newark's South Ward with his wife. Mary, and three sons: John, Elliott and Kevin.

**"We've only just begun"**